

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,
As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

It is disheartening to see so many negative ads -- clips that are taken out of context and that proliferate lies. What happened to the integrity of our broadcasters? In order to make informed decisions about our country's future, we need comprehensive and honest reporting, not the "crap" we see on television.

Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

Sincerely,

Maria Paul
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